

*The Origine of TEMPLE
CHURCHES, and other Things
pertaining thereto.*

A
S E R M O N

Preached on the

A N N I V E R S A R Y

O F T H E

Dedication of the Church

A T

B L E T C H L Y, in BUCKS,

On Wednesday, September the 8th, 1736.

*We have heard with our Ears, and our Fathers
have declared unto us the noble Works that were
done in their Days, and in the Old Time before
them.*

L O N D O N :

Printed in the YEAR M,DCC,XXXVI.

The Original of
The Charter and other
pertaining thereto.

S E R M O N

Preached on the

ANNIVERSARY

Dedicated to the Church



By the Rev. Mr. [illegible]

On [illegible]

[illegible text]

L O N D O N

Printed in the Year [illegible]

THE
P R A Y E R

Before S E R M O N.

GREAT GOD! Who fitteſt between the Cherubim, and inhabiteſt the Praiſes of the Bleſſed; and yet *Thy Delight is among the Children of Men*: The Heavens, and the Heaven of Heavens cannot contain Thee; and yet Thou bends theſe Heavens, and comes down by Thy Holy Spirit, unto theſe Earthly Houſes which Thy faithful People build unto Thee. The Hallelujahs of Arch-Angels can add nothing to Thy Felicity, Thy Glory; and yet Thou condeſcends to liſten to the Hymns of mortal Creatures, and receive their religious Homage and Adorations. Thou dwelleſt not in Temples made with Hands, neither art ſerved with the Works of Men's Hands, as tho' Thou neededſt any Thing; and yet Thou haſt graciouſly

ously promised to meet with Thy assembled People, to be in the Midst of them, and bless them. In Hopes of the Fulfilment of that blessed Promise to us at this Time, we present ourselves before thy Divine Majesty.

We pray for all Christians dispersed over the Face of the Earth. That sound Part of Thy Catholick Church which Thy Right Hand hath planted among us, establish Thou It. Defend It against all open Attempts and secret Machinations. Let no Weapon form'd against It prosper, but let them prosper who love It. May It every Day grow up and increase in Strength, in Beauty and Perfection. We do in a special Manner, as our bounden Duty is, pray for WILLIAM Lord Archbishop of Canterbury, and RICHARD Lord Bishop of Lincoln, and the whole Body of the Clergy under them. *Clothe Thy Priests with Righteousness, that Thy People committed to their Charge may shout aloud for Joy.*

Graciously accept of the Homage and Thanksgivings which this People now assembled

assembled do offer unto Thy Divine Majesty, for the Means of Grace vouchsafed to them, and the precious Opportunities of waiting upon Thee in *Thy House of Prayer*. We are very sensible, O Lord, this is a Favour Thou does not vouchsafe to many Nations; a Favour, we own, on Account of our manifold Abuse of it, we have render'd ourselves utterly unworthy of. *But there is Mercy with Thee, that Thou may'st be feared.* And Oh that Thy Patience and long Forbearance *may lead us to Repentance*, and to a better Improvement of these precious Means of Grace for the future.

And do Thou hearken, O Lord our God, unto the Supplications of Thy People in this Place. Hear Thou from Thy Dwelling-Place, even from Heaven, and when Thou hearest, forgive their imperfect Services. If we Thy People shall sin against Thee, but yet shall return, and confess Thy Name in this House, then hear Thou from Heaven Thy Dwelling-Place, and forgive their Sins, and shew them the Way wherein they are to walk, that they may

may fear Thee so long as they live in the Land. And if the Stranger comes and prays in this House, then hear Thou from Heaven Thy Dwelling-Place, and do according to all that the Stranger calleth to Thee for, that all People may know that this House, which our Fathers have built, is called by Thy Name. What Prayer or what Supplication soever shall be made of any Man, or of all the People, when every one shall know his own Sore, and his own Grief, and shall spread forth his Hands in this Place, then hear Thou from Heaven, and forgive, and render to every Man according to his Needs. Let Thine Eyes be open upon this House Day and Night: Let the Walls of it resound with Thy Praises, Thy Word be diligently read and preached, Thy Sacraments duely administer'd, and Prayers and Thanksgivings continually offer'd up unto Thee in ^{24. OG 62} it. May there never be wanting a Seed to serve Thee in this Holy Temple, while Sun and Moon endure in the Firmament. Amen, Amen. *Our Father*

Acts



Acts XVII. 24.

*God --- dwelleth not in Temples
made with Hands, &c.*

IT is just Ground of Wonder to see Men reason so well on the Things of the World, and carry Extravagance so far in the Matters of Religion. Among the *Pagans* it is certain the most enlighten'd and ingenious People have had very absurd and ridiculous Notions of Religion. The *Egyptians*, so celebrated for their fine Discoveries and Learning, so grossly erred as to imagine that the Gods took up their Abodes in the Bodies of Brutes, and appear'd under the Figures of the vilest Reptiles. The *Romans*, who
were

were more reasonable, and who for the Space of nigh two hundred Years would not suffer any Image or Representation of the Deity, in Time had almost as many Gods as there are diverse Events and Actions of Life, so that it is not possible not to be exceedingly surpriz'd to read the Names of so many pretended Deities, and not deplore the Blindness of human Nature in paying Homage to them. This lamentable Weakness was not peculiar to the *Egyptians* and the *Romans*. The *Athenians*, at the Time our Apostle preach'd the fine Sermon to them, whence we have taken our Text, were the most considerable People in the World, for their Humanity, their Learning, and the Culture of the liberal Arts: In these Accomplishments, *Rome* herself, that Mistress of the World, was not to be compar'd to *Athens*; for thither the imperial City sent her Youth to receive their last Finishings in her Schools, Academies, and amongst her polite Citizens. Notwithstanding which, that celebrated

lebrated People in the Matters of the Deity and Religion, were blind and extravagant to the last Degree. A surprizing Instance whereof we have now before us, even that of erecting an Altar to an *unknown God*, a God they were utterly ignorant of. *As I passed by*, saith the Apostle, *and beheld your Devotions, I found an Altar with this Inscription, To the unknown God*; and then he proceeds to tell them, that, *God who made the World and all Things therein, seeing he is the Lord of Heaven and Earth, dwelleth not in Temples made with Hands, neither is worshipped with Men's Hands, as tho' he needed any Thing of his Creatures.*

Here the Holy Apostle confutes the Error of the *Athenians* and other *Pagans*, who imagin'd that the Gods made their Abode in the Temples and Altars dedicated to them. It must, however, be own'd, That this Belief did not universally obtain. * Two famous Kings of *Persia* demolish'd the Temples which

* *Xerxes* and *Cambyſes*

they found in *Egypt* and *Greece*, saying, It was an Injury done to the Divinity to confine him within the Walls of a House. The ancient *Germans* maintain'd that this was to violate the Respect due to the Gods. *Plato* declar'd against them, the whole Sect of the *Stoicks* disapprov'd the Use of them; and the *Athenians* themselves would suffer no Statue to be erected to Clemency, saying, that she ought to dwell in the Hearts of Men, and not in Places unworthy to possess her. It would indeed be the Height of Extravagance to imagine the Deity capable of being shut up in a little Space, Him whom the Heavens and the Heaven of Heavens cannot contain. So that those Heathens, if they could form no other Notion of the Use of Temples, than that they were a Sort of Prisons to their Gods, acted wisely in declaring against them. The whole Universe is God's Temple, and the Place he takes sweetest Delight in, is the Hearts of good Men. But to return,

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I am inclin'd to think the *Jews* gave into Notions like to those of the Generality of the *Pagan* World, and which might give Occasion to St. *Stephen* to tell them, as he does in the 7th Chap. of the *Acts*, That tho' *Solomon* built him a House, howbeit the most High dwelleth not in Temples made with Hands; and he refers them to one of their own Prophets, who introduceth the Lord speaking thus, *Heaven is my Throne, and the Earth is my Footstool, what House will ye build me, saith the Lord, or what is the Place of my Rest? Hath not my Hands made all these Things.* Those carnal *Jews* imagin'd that the Lord had no Rest but in their Temples, and the modern *Jews* are so extravagant as to say, that every Time the Lord thinks of his suffering their Temple to be burnt, he cannot keep from shedding Tears and crying out. What Impiety! But Almighty God soon gave that selfish People to understand, that he could be very well without both them and their Temple,

and that of the very Stones he could raise up Children to worship and serve him better than they had done.

In fact, the infinite Creator can stand in no need of the Services of his Creatures. The Righteousness of Man doth not extend to God. Before the World, or Angels, or Man, or any other Creature, had a Being, God was no less happy, no less great than he now is. *He is not worshipped, or served, by the Works of Men's Hands, as tho' he needed any Thing:* He has no Occasion for our Services or our Victims, for our Gold or our Silver, for our Prayers or our Hymns. He is not sensible to the Odours of Perfumes, or the Charms of a fine Symphony. We may warm ourselves by those Fires which we kindle for Sacrifice, and smell the Sweetness of our own Incense, with which, tho' God may be well pleased, he cannot be profited. The Benefit of our religious Services redound not to our Maker but to ourselves. It is not with the King of Kings as with the
Kings

Kings of this Earth: They do indeed need the Assistance of their Subjects, to enable them to live, to defend themselves, and support the Dignity of their Crowns. But the supream Being is rich with his own Riches, and stands in no need of his Creatures, as a Hea-then * Poet could say; one who had not too much Religion. He who serves God thinking he has need of his Service, has a higher Opinion of himself than the God he serves, said ingeniously another Pagan †. Our lofty Temples, and magnificent Altars, and rich Statues, our pompous Ceremonies and chargeable Sacrifices, tho' they be Testimonies and Indications of our Respect and Homage to the great Master of the Universe, yet can they no Ways add to his Felicity and Grandure.

Thus our Apostle's Argument amounts to no more than this, that Men should beware, least, instead of honouring God by erecting Temples for his Service

* *Ipsa suis pollens opibus nihil indiga nostri.* Lucret.

† *Hierocles.*

and Worship, they dishonour him, by imagining that his incomprehensible Nature can be bounded within a little Space ; or that the Services and Homage of his Creatures can contribute any Thing to his essential and infinite Greatness. The holy Apostle would by no means have us to think, as some Enthusiasts do contend, that the Erection of Temples is here forbidden. He intends nothing else but only to rectify the Mistakes of those who built them. Did not God command that a Tabernacle, and afterwards a Temple should be erected unto him ? And have not Christians at this Day many Temples or Churches where they pay their religious Homage to their great Creator ? And hath he not promised to be with them, tho' but two or three were assembled in his Name. Almighty God, then, is willing and highly pleased that Men should build and consecrate Temples to him, where Flesh and Blood may have no Property, and where his faithful People may assemble themselves
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in a solemn Manner, to unite their Hearts and their Voices in the Worship and Praises of the Author of their Being.

Thus my Text and the sacred Solemnity of the Day do necessarily oblige me to call upon you to fix your Attention on these Things. *viz.*

I. The Origin of Temples, and other Things pertaining thereto.

II. The Consecration of these sacred Edifices; and the Antiquity and Reasonableness of celebrating the Anniversaries thereof. As for the Way and Manner of observing these Anniversaries or Feasts, I doubt we must defer the Consideration of that 'till next Lord's Day, when, 'tis to be fear'd, there will be too much Occasion to enlarge upon it. Let us begin.

I. In the earliest Times there were no Temples. Astronomy made up not only the Learning but likewise the Religion of the Ancients; being naturally invited by the Serenity of the Climate to the Contemplation of the heavenly Bodies, they were soon struck with the
admirable

admirable Beauty, Glory, and the Regularity of them; and from the universal Benefit and sweet Influence the Sun and Moon had upon all Things, they concluded them to be Gods. The *Persians* and other *Eastern Nations* worshipped the Sun as the supream Deity, and the sovereign Lord of Nature. *Job*, who is the ancientest Author we have, vindicating himself from this Idolatry in his sublime Dialect, saith, *If I beheld the Sun when it shined, or the Moon walking in brightness.* Ch. 31. v. 26. This being the Case, such being the Religion of the earliest Times, It is not to be wonder'd at if as yet there were no Temples. These cover'd Edifices being fitter to exclude and shut out the Deities, than to give access to them. Hence it is, I conceive, that the People of the *East* at this Day go out of their Houses to salute the rising Sun. The most ancient Idolaters, therefore, worship'd in the open Air, and frequently on the Tops of Mountains, to have the freer Prospect of the Heavens, and that they might be nearer to their
 Gods,

Gods, upon which Account they thought their Prayers were the better heard. *

It was not long before Men were wearied with those Places of Worship, which expos'd them to many Inconveniences. They did therefore next take themselves to the Use of Woods and Groves; very probably for this double Reason; first, as they were agreeable and refreshing in those hot Countries; and, secondly, as they struck the Worshipers with a sacred Horror and Reverence, and gave them a stronger Belief of the Presence of the Deity they invoked. The Retirement of the Place, the Silence that reign'd there, and the Gloominess of the Shade, could not fail to make deep Impressions on their Minds. The *Roman* Laws of the twelve Tables enacted, that they should plant Groves in the Country in Honour of the Gods. We have frequent Notice taken of these religious Scenes in Holy Scripture: They were adorn'd with Hangings, as appears from the 23d Chapter of the 11th

* *Nec tam presentes alibi cognoscere Divos.*

Book of *Kings*. They were a mighty Eye-fore to the ancient Prophets, and Almighty God commanded the *Israelites* to destroy them. *Gideon* cut down the Wood sacred to *Baal*. The Kings of *Israel* and *Judah* planted several, which were again destroy'd by their pious Successors. This Change of Places of Worship gave Rise to new Deities: The *Pagans* fell to worship the Trees themselves. *Strabo* saith, the *Indians* thought it a Crime to cut them down. The *Greeks* revered the Oak. *Pliny* makes frequent mention of old Trunks; and *Arnobius* speaks of ancient Trees adorn'd with Ribbands, to which he paid religious Homage before his Conversion.

The next Thing which the busy Heads of ancient Times thought of to honour their Gods with, was the Erecting of *Altars*. At first they were made of Earth, or Turf laid one upon another; afterwards they made Altars of Stone, Marble, Wood, Horn. *Jupiter Olympius* had an Altar made of the
Ashes

Ashes of the Victims that were sacrificed to him. To those Altars the Heathens resorted, not only to perform their Sacrifices and Prayers, but also to form new Alliances and Treaties, and thereby to render them more solemn; they moreover served for Asylums. They were not all of the same Structure: Some were round, others square, others oval; some of a great Height, and others only two or three Foot raised from the Ground. The ancient Patriarchs erected Altars, and resorted to them as the ordinary Places of Worship. *Abraham* built an Altar at *Sichem*: Nay, we find *Noah*, immediately after the Deluge, erecting an Altar to the Lord, and sacrificing thereon, *Gen. viii. 20.*

We do moreover find mention made of portable Temples or Shrines (to which the Tabernacle might give Rise) both in prophane History, and in our sacred Volume. *Egypt* abounded with them, and we read in the 19th Chapter of the *Acts of the Apostles*, that great Profit was made by the Artizans of *Ephesus*

of the Silver Shrines of the Goddess
Diana.

In fine, the *Pagans* had little sacred
Inclofures, shut up with Palifadoes or
Branches of Trees, where they wor-
shipped. Of this Sort was * *Gades*, in
Honour of *Hercules*; that little Penin-
sula and Promontory in *Spain*, on Ac-
count of that Demi-God, was as much
talk'd of in ancient Times as it is at this
Day, for a very different Reason.

As Mankind began to multiply upon
the Face of the Earth, and to be more
improved, they set themselves to the
Building of Temples or Houses with
cover'd Roofs. The open Air, the Tops
of Mountains, Woods and Groves, by
long Experience, were found very in-
convenient for Men to assemble them-
selves in. But who were the Authors or
first Builders of those Edifices? *Hospi-
nian*, and other learned Men, have
reckon'd up Seventeen different Opini-
ons on this Matter. I am very sensible
this is no proper Place or Time to enter

* *Gibraltar*.

on that Discussion ; I shall therefore, for the present *, content myself only to observe to you, that it is not probable there were any Temples before the Flood, or even in *Noah's* Time, whatever fabulous Histories and pretended ancient Monuments, lately brought to Light, would assert to the contrary. However, I do think there were some Temples before *Moses* ; and I do not see wherefore the Generality of learned Men set themselves to combat this Opinion. The Honour of the *Jewish* Legislator, and our sacred Scriptures, does not suffer by admitting the great Antiquity of *Pagan* Temples. If two learned Men of our own †, have so far exalted the Theology of the *Egyptians*, as to make the People of God take many of their religious Rites and Usages from them, let us not combat all their Sentiments (several whereof are manifestly false) by rejecting well attested Facts.

* This will be set in a full Light in a compleat Treatise on Temples or Churches, to which this Sermon has given Occasion.

† *Spencer and Marsham.*

It was usual for Kings and Heroes in their Life-time to build Monumental Houses and Piles; not only, as is generally thought, in the View of being buried in them, but likewise that they might be worshipp'd after their Decease; for on their leaving the World, they commanded their Subjects to pay them divine Honours: thus these Mausoleums were in Fact real Temples. In Imitation whereof, we find the ancient *Christians* erecting Temples on the formerly abject Graves of the Martyrs, to repay, by Honours due to their Memories, the Injustices and Disgraces done to their Persons.

Chappels were before Temples. It is more natural and usual to begin with small Things, before we proceed to greater. This is in Order. The Temple of *Janus*, the oldest in *Rome*, was nothing but a little Chappel of Copper; it could only contain the Statue of that God. The old Word *Fanum*, a Fane or Chappel, comes from *Faunus*, the God or King of the *Aborigines* in *Latium*:

um: He taught the People Religion and Tillage, the ancientest Things in the World. The oldest Cities in *Europe* bear this Name. *Fano*, a City in *Italy*, is called in *Cæsar*, *Fanum Fortunæ*; *Vocano* in the same Country, by *Livy*, *Fanum Vacunæ*, &c. This old Word has been retain'd and adopted by *Christians*; *Fanum S. Audomari*, St. Omar's in *Flanders*; *Fanum S. Desiderii*, St. *Dezier* in *France*; *Fanum S. Andreae*, St. *Andrew's* in *Scotland*; *Fanum S. Albani*, * St. *Alban's* in *England*.

With relation to the Site of the first Temples, they were mostly on mountainous Places, for the Reasons before hinted at; besides, on such Places they were the more conspicuous, and had the surer Foundation. It may, however, be remark'd, that this Choice of Place did not universally obtain: *Pluto*, and the infernal Gods, had their Temples built in low Places. The Gods who presided over the Arts, Virtue and Peace,

* St. *Alban*, the *British* Protomartyr, was a Citizen of *Verulam*, from him called St. *Albans*. He was martyred under *Dioclesian*, An. 303.

had theirs in the most populous Cities. The Temples sacred to *Neptune* and to the Nymphs, were commonly situate on the Sea-Shore, and the Banks of Rivers; and those of *Esculapius*, and the other Gods of Medicine, in the most wholesome Places. Thus the Situation of those Structures were figurative and expressive of those Deities to whom they were dedicated.

As to the Fashion or Structure of Temples, there was no Uniformity observed. The Figures of some, however, had a peculiar Significancy in them. The most ancient were open in the Top, that the Worshippers might see the Heavens. The Temple of *Jupiter*, in the Isle of *Crete*, one of the oldest in the World, was an immense Arch, which let in the Light only above, in order to hide from the Eye all Objects abroad, except the Heavens.

It were endless as well as indecent to enlarge on these Things here. Allow me only to make two general Remarks.

I. Such

I. Such is the infinite Grandeur of the Deity, and the Littleness and Nothingness of the Creature, that it hath been look'd upon by all Mankind, as an Act of high Presumption to approach the Divine Presence without some Preparation and Composure of Mind. Even the *Pagans* found, and they have sorely complain'd to find, their Souls so press'd down by Corruptions and Earthly Things, as to render it exceeding difficult to shake off those Clogs, and to lift up their Souls to Heaven. Now the better to assist them in this arduous Task, and to prepare them for their solemn Approaches, most of those external and internal Ornaments, Decrees, and Inscriptions, wherewith they set off their Temples, were intended. Thus their Temples were commonly furrounded with Trees, whose Shade, as has been already observed, is so apt to compose Men's Minds, and to turn them to Devotion. Before some there were large Area's, in the Center whereof there were a sort of *Umbraculæ*, or Repositoriums,

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that

that the People might stop a while there, and consider whither they were going. The Avenues that led to many of them were very long, and accounted holy Ground. Some had Columns or Pillars before the Porch, upon which were to be seen significant Figures and Inscriptions. I shall here give a few Instances of some of the finest of them. *God sees and rules all*: This gave Ground to the *Egyptian* Hieroglyphicks in several Temples, which represented God by an Eye in a Scepter, the Emblems of Providence and Authority. In our sacred Scriptures the same Thing is represented by the Phrase of, *Beholding from his Throne*: For the Divine Majesty is no idle Spectator, but improves the Height of his Seat, and the universal Prospect he hath from thence, to the Good of all Mankind. In a Temple at *Gnossus*, the Capital of *Crete*, the Supream Being was represented without Ears, to denote that the Sovereign Lord of the Universe has no need of Bodily Organs to hear the

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the Complaints and Prayers of Men * Upon this Statue were to be read these Words: *I give Being, Life, and Motion to all Creatures; no one can know me, but he who seeks to resemble me.* Upon a Statue of *Pallas*, in a Temple dedicated to her, was this Inscription; *The Gods represent themselves to a pure Heart, and are hid from those who endeavour to know them by the Understanding alone.* Upon the Wall of a Temple of the Goddess *Urania*; *The Divine Laws are not Chains to fetter us, but Wings to raise us up to the bright Heavens.* In an Oratory of the *Pythian Apollo* was this ancient Oracle; *The Gods take less Delight to dwell in Heaven than in the Soul of the Just, which is their † true Temple.* That illustrious Heathen Temple on the Portal had these Words in Letters of Gold, γνῶθι σεαυτὸν, *Know Thyself*; that the Worshippers, by a true Consideration of their own Unworthiness, might approach in all Humility to their supposed Deities. Those

* *Plut. of Isis and Osiris.*

† *Hierocles on the Golden Verses of Pythagoras.*

Pools and Basons of Water which were without the Temples were divinely instructive. The various Rites of Washings and Cleanings, which all Nations used before they enter'd their Temples, were only to mind them of Purity of Heart, which the * Heathens knew to be necessary to all that drew near to God.

And surely it is more requisite for those who worship the true God, to reflect upon the vast Disproportion between themselves and Him, which is as great as between Finite and Infinite, Holy and Impure: and therefore we find all *Christians* wisely imitating the *Pagan* Examples in these Devices and Inscriptions. Sometimes we read a Passage of Scripture above the Porch or Gate, that the People as they enter the Temple, may impress their Minds with a Sense of the August Presence they are going before, and the Holy Duties they are to be engaged in. Sometimes we read useful Lessons of Morality, taken out of our sacred Volume, on the Inside of our Temples.

* See a fine Passage in *Plato. Alcibiad.*

On the Ceiling we frequently see the Representation of Sun, Moon, and Stars, or the Visible Heavens, to raise our Thoughts to those that are invisible. Our sacred Altars are set off with decent, but significant Ornaments; some whereof are sublimely instructive and elevating. Sometimes we see a Glory with Rays of Gold darting forth on all Sides; the outmost Length the reformed World have ventur'd in Representing the Divinity. Sometimes we see a *Sursum Corda*, Lift up your Hearts; and sometimes the ineffable Name in the sacred Language, on the Tops of our Altars; and on the Sides, winged Images, in white, the Emblems of Purity and Devotion. In some very well reformed Churches *, we still find the Walls of their Temples adorn'd with the Pictures and Statues of the Holy Apostles and first Sufferers, with the Instruments of their Martyrdom; more lively and striking Representations of the Infant bleeding State of the Christian-Church, than the

* The *Lutheran*.

sacred Annals themselves, which the martyr'd Writers have left behind them, speaking, if I may so express myself, and living Lessons, to what Height, to what Heroism, Christianity, when firmly believed and embraced, will lift Men. In some Churches we see the Statues and Effigies of the Founders, with their Donations. In the Cathedral Church of *Magdebourg* is the Effigies of the Empress *Edgitha*, Daughter to the *English* Saxon King *Edmund*, with a Representation of eighteen Casks of Gold by her, which she gave to it.

II. Another Remark I would here make is this, As Learning is the Ornament and Support of Religion, *Libraries* have been look'd on by all civiliz'd Nations of what Religion soever, as very ornamental and useful Pieces of sacred Furniture; and therefore we find them erecting Libraries in Houses adjoining to their Temples, and frequently in the Temples themselves. *Diodorus* informs us, that in the magnificent Temple which *Simandius* King of *Egypt*

gypt caus'd to be built, there was a well furnish'd Library, with this Inscription, *The Medicine of the Soul*. Adjoining to that Temple, which *Augustus Cæsar* built on the *Palatine Mount* after the Victory of *Actium*, there was a spacious Portico, for a fine Library. It was an ancient Custom to lay up the Works of Wit and Genius in those sacred Edifices. The Poems of *Hesiod* were kept in the *Muses* Temple, written in Lead, and *Herodotus's* excellent History being so well liked, after publick reading in the *Olympick* Games, was carried in Triumph, and laid up in a neighbouring Temple. The Library and Works of *Galenus*, that celebrated Phyfician of the second Century, had an Oratory built on purpose to receive them. In the Temples and Pagods of the *Persians*, *Chinese*, and other polite Nations of the *East*, our modern Travellers are surpriz'd at the Sight of so many splendid Libraries and Manuscripts, excellently painted, richly bound, and cover'd with Plates
of

of Gold and Silver. Nay, the Musulman himself, that implacable Enemy to all good Learning, hath open'd some of their Mosques to let in the *Muses*. Nor is there a religious House or Community of *Regulars* at this Day in the World, without this precious Piece of Furniture, and which, when improved, must necessarily give them the Ascendant over any other Body of Clergy, that want these Advantages. What gloomy and malign Planet hath presided over the Erection of parochial Libraries in this Land, and put a Stop thereto, after so fair a Beginning, I do not know. That those Places are little resorted to, and not enough prized by those, for whose Sakes they are erected, is an Argument, I trust, equally conclusive against the Use of them in all other Countries and People on the Globe who have them, and who for that Reason alone, will never suffer themselves to be prevail'd upon, either to shut them up, or discontinue their Care of them. The best Foundations and Institutions that

that the Wit of Man or Angel can devise, will be liable to Objections of some Sort or other. Happy were it indeed for Men did they take a real Pleasure in Things worthy of employing them. But this will not always be the Case; so long as there is a Mixture of Men of different Make and Complexions in the World; and it is of such a Mixture that all Societies, of what Kind soever, have been, and it is not to be doubted will be, compos'd till the End of Time. What therefore Men are chiefly to consider in all their publick Schemes and Establishments is not, whether they may be slighted by some, and declaimed against by others; but chiefly whether the Things be not great, and useful, and laudable in themselves, and the Advantages and Conveniences do not preponderate and weigh down the Inconveniences that may be brought against them. Through what an Ocean of Difficulties has all those noble Establishments forced their Way, which have but very lately been made in this

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Nation!

Nation! I mean the Erection of Charity-Schools, and of Work-Houses for the Poor; the Societies for promoting Christian Knowledge, and for Reformation of Manners, and for Propagating the Gospel in foreign Parts.

It would afford ample Matter for a Volume to describe the Magnificence and Riches of *Pagan* Temples. It were to debase the Majesty of a Christian Pulpit, and to trifle with an Assembly of Christians, to enlarge on these Things. The Temple of *Diana* of *Ephesus* is taken Notice of in our sacred Annals: It was 425 Feet in Length, and 220 in Breadth, adorn'd with 127 Pillars, the Gift of so many Kings, of such exquisite and rich Workmanship, as to surprize all Beholders. All *Asia*, for 400 Years, contributed to the building of that glorious Pile *. The Temple of *Ecbatana*, the Capital of ancient *Persia*, tho' spoil'd of its richest Ornaments upon *Alexander's* Invasion, yet long after it had still gilded Columns

* *Diod. Sic. L. 1.*

and Tiles of Gold and Silver, which being melted down amounted to 4000 Talents †. At *Persepolis* the Metropolis of the *Eastern* World, in the Time of *Cyrus*, the Temple of *Ania* shone out with a Lustre superiour to that of *Ecbatana*. Our most sober modern ~~Wri-ter~~ ^{Tru} confirm what ancient Histories say of those Piles; they seem to be at a Loss for Words to express the Wonders of their very Ruins. The Temple of *Upsal*, the chief Seat of *Paganism* of the *North*, was lin'd with Gold. Those poor *Pagans* thought they could not exceed in those outward Significations of Gratitude and Respect for the Gods, to whom they ow'd all Things, and whose the whole World was. The ancient *Cretans* reserv'd all their Riches and Skill in Architecture for the Temples of their Deities. Their own Dwellings were plain and without Ornament. They durst not live in Houses like those of the immortal Beings.

† A Talent is about 4500 Pounds of our Money.

~~Philopond, Capel, Chevreau.~~

That glorious Temple of *Jerusalem*, which was built by the Direction of Heaven, is described at large in our sacred Volume, and in *Josephus*, this accurate Historian assures us that there were no less than 400,000 gold Vessels, and 1,300,000 of Silver, &c. Taking the Computations of several learned Men at a Medium, and reducing them to our Coin, I find the Sum will amount to near 7000 Millions of Pounds Sterling, besides the Wages, Diet, and Presents to the Workmen; and the Jewels are reckon'd to exceed that Sum: A Sum sufficient to purchase, at a competent Price, the united Kingdoms of *Great-Britain* and *Ireland*, with the Dominions thereto belonging, eight or nine Times over: A Sum which forty Times exceeds the current Cash which we can reasonably suppose to be in all *Europe*. So that were all the Kings of this wealthy Part of the World to open their Treasures, and join in the Erection of such another Pile, it would be found they had undertaken a Work to which their united

* *Volapond, Capel, Choborean, &c.*

united Strength was not equal, and it would remain imperfect.

II. With Relation to the Dedication of Temples or Churches, and the Antiquity and Reasonableness of solemnizing the Anniversaries thereof, we suppose you well instructed in these, as they are the usual Subjects of these Solemnities which are so constantly observ'd in this Place. Allow me only to remark in general,

I. Tho' the Words Consecration and Dedication be always confounded and made to stand for the same Thing, yet are they really different; the first denotes the Place, (on which the Church is to be built,) which is first to be consecrated; the other is apply'd to the Church, when built, and is then dedicated.

II. All Ages, and Countries, and Religions have thought it necessary there should be Places solemnly consecrated to the Worship and Service of God; and Reason taught a Heathen to conclude *Quod ab omnibus gentibus observatum est, id non nisi a Deo*

*a Deo sanctum * est.* The same Light of Nature taught another Heathen to say, *Licet ædes sacra Claudii Cæsaris collapsa sit, Religio tamen occupat solum†,* “tho’ *Cesar’s* Temple be in Ruins, yet is “the Ground on which it stood Holy;” and nothing could prevail on *Trajan* to permit publick Baths to be made where formerly a Temple was built. Nay the Original of consecrated and separate Places for the Worship of God is so ancient, that we find even the Sons of *Adam* had a Place where to bring their Sacrifices, *Gen. 4.* There ’tis said of *Cain* and *Abel* that *They brought their Offerings to the Lord*: From whence it is plain, they did not offer them in the very Places where they took them, but first brought them to the Lord; which cannot otherways be interpreted, than that they brought them to some determinate and appropriate Place, where they were accustomed to worship God. So that even before the Flood there were certain Places set apart to the Service of

* *Tully.*† *Pliny.*

God. Immediately after, we find *Noah* erecting an Altar, to repair to, for Sacrificing; which Practice was continued by the holy Patriarchs, as may be seen in the Book of *Genesis**. Of the Dedication of the Temple of *Jerusalem*, you have a full Account in the second Book of *Chronicles*. The first Thing, after three long Centuries of almost uninterrupted Persecutions, the Christians, leaving their Desarts and lurking Places, betook themselves to, was the Building of Churches and Consecrating them. So stately and august they were, that there is nothing more common in *Naxianzen* and other *Greek* Writers than to stile them *Βασιλικας*, and the *Latins* *Dominicas*, from their Majesty and Beauty. For in those early Times, when the World newly divorced from *Paganism* was enamour'd with true Religion, they thought they could never build their Churches stately enough, or set apart and consecrate them with great enough Solemnity.

* XII. 6, 7, 8. XXI. 33, &c.

We do very readily grant, that in the Days of the Apostles, and the Ages immediately succeeding, the poor Christians were glad with any Thing, and reckon'd the least Toleration a Favour: But when the State of the Church was changed by those great Revolutions in the *Roman* Empire, and *Christianity* ascended the Imperial Throne, and the great Monarchs of the Earth vail'd their Crowns to the Cross, then Order and Decency began to be look'd after. It is therefore absurd to alledge, that stately Temples and the solemn Dedication of them, were Things unknown to the first Ages: The Church was then in its Infancy, and under the Cross; and because the primitive *Christians* did not do what in their then Circumstances it was out of their Power to do, therefore we are to imitate them; and instead of assembling in decent and appropriate Places, we are to creep into Holes and Dens, to meet at the Foot of an Oak, or in the Clift of a Rock. Thus far some Men's wild Reasonings amount to.

And

And shall *Christianity* then expect no better Usage and Accommodation under believing *Christians*, than under persecuting *Pagans*? The Time therefore we must principally eye is that, when God was pleased to give Rest and Peace to his long afflicted Church, and our Divine Religion became the Establishment of the Earth; and if from those Days this Practice cannot be clear'd, let an irrevokable Decree be pass'd against it; we are willing to return to that lamentable persecuting Period, to flee to the Desarts, and creep into Holes and Dens with the first *Christians*. Now, as every Nation in the World, so soon as it became *Christian*, vied one with another in advancing the Honour of *Christianity*, by erecting the most magnificent Temples for the Worship of the true God, so was there no Pains or Cost spared to consecrate these new Structures; for this is no novel Invention. Some sort of Consecration was bestow'd even upon the *Cœnacula*, the *Cryptæ*, the upper Rooms, and hiding Places,

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where

where the first *Christians*, through Fear, had their Meetings. Not laying any Stress on the Letters of *St. Clemens, Evaristus, &c.* which make express mention of Consecrations of Holy Places; we find this Practice as ancient as *Hyginus, A. C. 140.* whose Decree * to that Purpose is yet extant, *Omnes Basilicæ, &c.* And come but a little lower; when *Constantine* had erected that magnificent Temple on *Mount Calvary*, *Sozomen* † informs us what an Assembly of Reverend Prelates there met to consecrate it §. We do moreover find the Anniversaries of those Dedications observed by most civilized Nations. The Light of Nature taught the *Pagans*, and a divine Command enjoin'd the *Jews*, to celebrate those annual Feasts; nor was there any Thing more usual in the *Christian Church*, so soon as she had Temples and

* *Decret. de Consecrat. Dist. c. 1.* † *L. 2. c. 25.*

§ It was brought as a heavy Accusation against *St. Athanasius*, that he perform'd Divine Worship in a Temple before it was Dedicated. That Saint own'd it was wrong, but alledged for Excuse the Necessity he was in to do so; because of the Numbers of People then in the City, which were so great, that the other Churches could not contain them.

Oratories to bless God for. It appears, by the Titles of several of St. *Augustine's* Sermons, that they had solemn Anniversary Commemorations upon the Dedication Day. And to give the greater Pomp to those Festivals, it was usual in the *Gallican* and *Scottish* Churches for the Bishops to Ordain in them. It is true, this Practice was condemned by *Alexander III*; but as one of those Churches did not receive her Faith from *Rome*, she did not think herself obliged to receive Commands from her Bishop. *Eusebius* saith, that the Feasts of the Dedications which were solemnized in all the Cities of the Empire; the Consecration of the beautiful Oratories which were every Day rear'd up; the Bishops assembled from all Quarters; and the large Alms on those Occasions given to the Poor; the Concourse of Strangers, and the sacred Joy and mutual Love that reign'd among the People; were the noblest Spectacles that could be exhibited on the Theatre of the World. The same excellent Historian gives us large

Descriptions of the sacred Pomp; which consisted chiefly in Psalms and Hymns, in celebrating the Holy Eucharist; in putting up many Prayers and Thanksgivings to Almighty God, the Divine Protector of the Church; and in the Bishops, one after another, reciting many Sermons, and Panegyrical Discourses on the Imperial Founder, and in Praise of those holy Solemnities.

At the Dedication of the Church of *Tyre*, at which the Emperor himself assisted accompanied by three Hundred Bishops, the just mention'd eloquent Prelate pronounced a sacred Panegyrick, which he hath transmitted to Posterity. He began in these Terms; " O Friends
 " of God, Sacred Sir, and Holy Pontiffs,
 " who bear the Holy Tunica, who
 " have the Divine Unction, and the Sa-
 " cerdotal Robe of the Holy Ghost. "
 He then enlarges on the wonderful Goodness of God to his Church, a shining Instance whereof the People had before their Eyes; telling them they need not be beholden to the Reports of their Fathers:

Fathers : And as the greatest Wonder of all, he desires them to cast their Eyes on the Imperial Diadem and Robe, now adorn'd with the Cross, the sacred Symbol of their Salvation. He farther desires them to consider the Magnificence and Beauties of the new Structure, and to let no Part escape their Notice and their Admiration. He concludes by magnifying the Power of J E S U S C H R I S T, which had render'd the Church every Day more flourishing, maugre the War which all Men for three Centuries had rais'd against it ; which had subdued the most barbarous and idolatrous Nations, and extended his Holy Empire to the outermost Parts of the Earth.

With this excellent Pattern before my Eyes, I shall put a Period to this (I doubt tedious) Discourse, by calling upon you to thank and bless God for the Occasion of this Day's Solemnity. What can you render unto the Lord for these precious Opportunities and Means of Grace, and having the Doors
of

of your Temples still open to you? Alas, Christians! however lightly some may think of these Advantages, God does not at this Day deal so with many Nations. What lamentable Scenes of Wrecks and Desolations of so many Temples and National Churches might I here lay open before you! Whilst you see these Days of the Son of Man, and enjoy the inestimable Priviledges of the Gospel; how does the Church of God, which is the Spouse of CHRIST, in many Places of the World, afflict herself Night and Day, and can hardly endure to be comforted.

She weeps, she mourns, because she has no more Temples in many Places, where formerly she had them; and that those sacred Structures which were consecrated to the Living and True God, are now either razed to the Foundations, or polluted by an idolatrous Worship.

She weeps, she mourns, to see so many of her dear Children scattered over the Face of the Earth. What are become, cries she in the Bitterness of her

her Soul, of so many Children whom I had nourish'd? They were all gather'd under my Wings, and the Wrath of God hath dissipated them.

She mourns, she weeps, that many of her Members who had gloriously defended the Cause of God are no more, and that they are dead. "Those who made, saith she, my Joy and my Crown, my Defence and Bulwark, the Strength of *Israel*, are no more among the Living, to support the Interests of the Lord JESUS, to advance his Kingdom, and to bring many Captives to his Obedience." She mourns, she weeps, to see the Love of many waxing cold.

Rivers of Tears run down her Eyes to see so many of her Children, whom she had taken so much care to instruct, and nourish'd them with her Milk; after they had obtain'd glorious Victories over the World, and Sin, and preserv'd their Integrity; at length basely abandon the Truth, and go over to the Enemies Camp.

Rivers

Rivers of Tears run down her Eyes to see so many of her faithful Servants in the burning Furnace of Afflictions. "Why did I bring into the World so many Innocents to be expos'd to a thousand Evils; confin'd in Prisons, buried in Dungeons, loaded with Irons, made Slaves in Gallies, wandering on Mountains and in Deserts. Had it not been better that the Day of their Birth had prov'd the Day of their Deaths?"

Rivers of Tears run down her Eyes; she is ready to give herself over to Despair, when she beholds so many of her Children no more with her, snatch'd as they are from her Bosom in their tenderest Infancy, to be brought up with the Poison of antichristian Abominations.

Rivers of Tears run down her Eyes, because she thinks she sees no End of her Afflictions, which seem rather to increase than diminish.

She exceedingly grieves when she turns her weeping Eyes towards that Country

Country * where formerly she had two Millions of Children, and now hardly so many Hundreds; to that other Country † where, but a Score of Years ago, she had between seven and eight Hundred Temples, and now they are reduced to two Hundred: To that other §, where but very lately she had near three Hundred Temples, and now scarcely Thirty: To those other Countries **, which were in a Manner wholly her own, but now in the Hands of lawless Persecutors: To that other Country ††, where maugre the Vigilance of mitred Sovereigns, she still has a Remnant.

She exceedingly grieves when she considers that in that Country §§, near one Half whereof formerly belong'd to her Communion, she has been abandoned by many of its Princes, who force their Subjects to follow their Example, or drive them from their native Homes.

* The Kingdom of *France*. † *Hungary*. § *Poland*.
 ** The *Palatinate* and *Wirtemberg*. †† The Archbishoprick of *Salzburg*. §§ The *Empire*. See the *Present State of Germany* when publish'd.

She exceedingly grieves to see the Coldness and Lukewarmness of those few Princes that still outwardly adhere to her, to see them (fatal and detestable Politicks!) become Abettors of Apostates, and thereby give Encouragement to future Apostacies. She has seen, not without the bitterest Concern, two Men, descended of a glorious unspotted Ancestry, basely turning their Backs upon her; and then helped up, upon the Shoulders of her own Princes, and placed upon Thrones*.

And O! that, while the Judgments of the Lord are upon so many Places of the Earth, all the Inhabitants thereof might learn Righteousness. How long Almighty God will continue his Favours to us of these Lands, He only knows. If we measure that, according to the Use we make of them, it cannot be long we have to enjoy them. According to the present Disposition and Appearances of Things, our Destiny is not far off;

* *Augustus II. and III. Kings of Poland. See Miscellanea Sacra et profana. The second Edition of this Book, with considerable Additions, will soon appear.*

we are filling up the Measure of our Iniquities, and ripening to Destruction. A Levity, an Indifference to the Duties of their sacred Callings have infected *some*, whilst a Spirit of Atheism and Impiety has gone forth among all Ranks. Wars, and Rumours of Wars, and Desolations, are every Day striking our Ears. The Enemy, Men who call themselves *Christians*, are incessantly calling out, *Raze, raze to the Foundations*. The Divine Author of our Religion is vilify'd; our Holy Mysteries ridiculed; our August Truths disputed; our Sacred Volume treated as a Fable. Nothing less than a total Demolition of our Altars, and the Priests that serve at those Altars, is threaten'd. Let us, my Brethren, let us endeavour to appease the Divine Anger, that is already kindled against us, by our Prayers and our Tears; and most of all, by the Amendment of our Lives. *There is Mercy with God, that he may be feared. Let the Wicked forsake his Ways, and the unrighteous Man his Thoughts, and turn to the Lord, and*

he will yet pity them; and to their God,
and he will abundantly pardon. If a
 sincere Repentance and Contrition for
 our past Sins, and Abuse of former Mer-
 cies; and a hearty Resolution of Amend-
 ment for the future, be the happy Ef-
 fects of the Divine Threatnings, and
 Thunders, that hang over our Heads,
 we have nothing to fear from the *Ene-*
my. *The Lord reigneth, let the Earth*
be glad, and the British Isles thereof.
 God is stronger than his Creatures. *The*
Wrath, the Wickedness, of Man shall
redound to his Praise. You belong,
Christians, you belong to a Church, in
 its Infancy watered, and, if I may be
 allowed the Expression, consecrated
 with the Blood of her Martyrs; ex-
 posed, by Divine Permission, to open
 Force and secret Machinations; but
 none of these Things have been able to
prevail against Her. And every Time
 she has been attack'd in Argument, by
 innumerable Enemies of all Religions,
 and of all Complexions; by *Roman*
Missionaries, Protestant Schismatics,
 and

and Apostate *Christians*, Have we not seen Her come off with all the Pomp and Glory of a *Roman* Triumph? The most High is visibly in the Midst of Her; therefore though the Sea swell, and the Billows thereof roar, fear not; fear nothing in that Vessel, wherein God himself is the Pilot.

I conclude by desiring you to call to Mind the Days of Old. *Have you not heard with your Ears; and your Fathers declared unto you, the noble Works that were done in their Days, and in the Old Times before them?* Bless the Lord for putting it into the Hearts of your godly Ancestors to build such noble Structures, and to leave hardly any Thing for their Posterity to do, but to assemble and praise God in them. Had He not inspired them with that sacred Zeal; had those pious and costly Works been left to us to do, it's great Odds if *Christianity* should not be still in its Infancy, and *Christians* worshipping God in the open Air, or in the Clift of a Rock. You cannot doubt of this, if you do
but

but reflect on what happen'd but Yesterday, on Account of a small Oratory or Chappel to be erected in this Neighbourhood. How slowly was the pious Work carried on? What Fears, what Misgivings, it ever should be finish'd? What Obstacles of every kind? A great Personal Charge of the generous Founder, accompanied with a Resolution and Courage not to be vanquish'd, through vast Expence of Time, Labour, and Fatigue, was no more than absolutely necessary to the perfecting of it. — Bless God, therefore, for the Zeal of your Forefathers: Honour their Memories: Reverence the Monuments or Reliques of their Piety, (the best *Reliques* they could have left you.) Was one of their venerable Shades at this Moment to appear, and accost you, it would be in these Words; *Reverence these Sanctuaries*: Reverence them by a constant frequenting of them: Reverence them by a decent Behaviour in them: Reverence them by a chearful contributing to the Support of them. — Christians, Reverence

rence this *Holy Ground*, where your Fathers and Grandfathers, for some Hundreds of Years, lie interred. Reverence that Altar, where these pious Ancestors, for a long Tract of Years, have received mystically the Body and Blood of CHRIST. Reverence this Sanctuary, where GOD hath so long spoken to Them and to You, in Sacraments and Sermons; and where They and You have spoken to Him so often in Prayers and Thanksgivings.

Dear Shepherd of Thy Flock! Great Bishop of Souls! After thou hast led this People into green Pasture, by the still Waters; after Thou hast nourish'd them with Thy Word and Sacraments in this lower House, translate them one after another to the House that is above, *There to Eat Bread and Drink new Wine in the Kingdom of their Father.* Amen, Amen.

F I N I S.

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...of ...
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...have received
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...to them
...and ...
...and you have
...in prayer and

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Dear ...
Bishop of ...
the people into green ...
fill waters ...
them with the word and sacraments
in the ...
offer ...
There is ...
When ...
Amen

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12